

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant expresses appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided. Furthermore, Applicant expresses appreciation to the Examiner for the acknowledgment of Applicant's Claim for Priority and Receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents.

Upon entry of the present paper, claims 1-9, 11, 14, and 16 will have been amended and claims 17-21 will have been added. The herein-contained amendments should not be considered an indication of Applicant's acquiescence as to the propriety of the outstanding rejection. Rather, Applicant has amended claims 1-9, 11, 14, and 16 in order to eliminate informalities, enhance clarity, and advance prosecution and obtain early allowance of the claims in the present application. Furthermore, no prohibited new matter has been introduced by the abovementioned amendments. Specifically, the amendments to claims 1, 5, and 9 are supported at least by page 12, lines 6-7 of the present application as filed, new claims 17, 19, and 21 are supported at least by page 11, lines 1-4 of the present application as filed, and new claims 18 and 20 are supported at least by page 9, line 17 to page 10, line 1 of the present application as filed.

Thus, claims 1-9 and 11-21 are pending in the present application, with claims 1, 5, and 9 being in independent form, and are submitted for consideration by the Examiner. Applicant addresses the rejections provided within the Official Action below and respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections pending in the present application together with an indication of the allowability of claims 1-9 and 11-21 (i.e., all pending claims) in the next Official communication. Such

action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate for at least the reasons provided below.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Claim Rejections

In the outstanding Official Action, claims 1-9 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Examiner asserted that the feature, as recited by currently amended independent claim 1 for example, of "a password . . . that initiates and authenticates access to the area of the database by the guest video game terminal" is not supported by the specification.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and submits that the above-recited limitation is supported at least by page 11, lines 13-19 and page 12, line 13 to page 14, line 1 of the present application as filed. The former of the above-mentioned passages recites, in pertinent part:

The message 201 also has input columns for a chat name 304 and a chat password 305 which are required to request the message server 113 to open the chat room.

Furthermore, the latter of the above-mentioned passage recites, in pertinent part:

An "invitation" command 511 is generated by obtaining a chat name 512 and a chat password 513 from the contents of the chat opening message 201 and obtaining a chat ID 514 from the contents of the chat opening response signal 204. . . Upon receiving the invitation message 207, the video game machines 103b and 103c display the screen 210 prompting the guests to enter the chat room and create the Enter Room signal 208. The screen 210 prompting the guests to enter the chat room also does not display the chat password 513 or the chat ID 514. That is, the chat password 513 and the chat ID 514 are recognized by the video game machines 103a to 103c during the exchange of the signals but are not communicated to the guests through the screen. . . When the guest selects "Enter Room" in the screen 210 prompting the guests to enter the chat room, the video game machines 103b and 103c create and transmit the enter room signal 208 to the database of the group of message servers 113.

The video game machine 103b sets a user name 601, a user ID 602, and a user password 603 of the chairman which have already been registered. An "Enter Room" command 611 is generated by obtaining the chat name 512, the chat password 513, and the chat ID 514 from the contents of the invitation signal 207.

Therefore, according to a non-limiting and exemplary embodiment of the present application as disclosed in the specification, the chairman creates a chat opening message 201 including a chat password 513. An invitation command is generated by obtaining the chat password 513 from the chat opening message 201. The invitation command is transmitted to a guest video game terminal 103b. The guest video game terminal 103b receives a request to enter the chat room. The guest video game terminal 103b sets a user password 603. Then, if the user password 603 corresponds to the chat password 513, the guest video game terminal 103b enters the chat room.

Therefore, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that each and every feature of the claims is supported by the specification. Furthermore, Applicant notes that, according to Section 2163 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, "the description need not be in *ipsis verbis* [i.e., 'in the same words'] to be sufficient." (*citing Vas-Cath*, 935 F.2d at 1563, 19 USPQ2d at 1116; *Martin v. Johnson*, 454 F.2d 746, 751, 172 USPQ 391, 395 (CCPA 1972)). Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1-9 and 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is improper and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Claim Rejections

In the outstanding Official Action, claims 1-9 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,216,144 to Morris et al. (hereinafter "MORRIS"), U.S. Patent No. 6,177,905 to Slutzman et al. (hereinafter

"SLUTSMAN"), U.S. Patent No. 6,223,177 to Tatham et al. (hereinafter "TATHAM"), and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,430,177 to Luzeski et al. (hereinafter "LUZESKI").

Initially, Applicant notes that, without agreeing to the propriety of the rejection and solely to expedite the patent application process, Applicant has amended claims 1-9, 11, 14, and 16 with claims 1, 5, and 9 being independent claims.

In this regard, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Specifically, with respect to currently amended independent claim 1, for example, Applicant respectfully submits that MORRIS, SLUTSMAN, TATHAM, and LUZESKI, whether considered alone or together in any proper combination thereof, fail to disclose or render obvious an electronic chat joining method including at least the feature of the invitation message being created by the chairman video game terminal during a process of setting the area of the database for storing chat messages.

With respect to the references cited by the Examiner, MORRIS discloses a system for facilitating negotiations between users over a communications network (MORRIS, Abstract). Specifically, MORRIS discloses a communication protocol, referred to as a "Rendezvous" protocol, which allows users to make proposals and counterproposals regarding the conditions and parameters for a proposed activity, such as, for example, an online "chat" session (MORRIS, col. 3, lines 59-67). According to MORRIS, if an originator wishes to set up a particular activity, the originator begins a Rendezvous session by sending a proposal to a buddy (MORRIS, col. 6, lines 56-60). Thereafter, the originator and the buddy can negotiate the conditions and parameters of the proposed activity (MORRIS, col. 3, lines 59-67). If the conditions and parameters of the proposed

activity are agreed upon, then the Rendezvous session is terminated and the proposed activity is allowed to begin (MORRIS, col. 7, lines 15-21).

In view of the above, Applicant submits that MORRIS does not disclose or render obvious the feature of creating an invitation during a process of setting an area of a database. Initially, with respect to the invitation by the originator to initiate a Rendezvous session, MORRIS does not appear to disclose setting an area of a database for storing the Rendezvous messages. However, assuming, *arguendo*, that MORRIS does set an area of a database for storing the Rendezvous messages, MORRIS discloses that an originator begins the Rendezvous session by sending a proposal (MORRIS, col. 3, lines 59-67). Thus, according to MORRIS, the invitation message would be created before an area of a database is set for storing chat messages, and not during a process of setting an area of a database, as recited by independent claim 1.

Furthermore, assuming the activity proposed by a Rendezvous session is interpreted to include setting an area of a database for storing chat messages, then MORRIS cannot be reasonably interpreted as disclosing the feature of creating an invitation message during a process of setting the area of the database. MORRIS clearly discloses sending an invitation for a proposed activity and that the proposed activity is not engaged until after the Rendezvous session is successfully completed. Thus, even if the proposed activity of MORRIS were to include the feature of setting an area of a database for storing chat messages, the invitation would have clearly been created before the process of setting the area of the database, and not during the process of setting the area of the database, as recited by independent claim 1.

SLUTSMAN discloses a method and apparatus for conference call mediation wherein a subscriber who desires to host a conference sends a conference request to a web service control point (SLUTSMAN, Abstract). The web service control point broadcasts invitations to the participant and acts as a negotiator between potential participants by continuing to resend the conference attributes until an agreement regarding the conference is reached (SLUTSMAN, Abstract). Then, after the web service control point determines that all conference attributes have been agreed upon by the conference participants, the web service control point coordinates allocation of the communication resources necessary for the conference, such as, for example, contacting a telephone service provider to request allocation of public switched telephone network resources (SLUTSMAN, col. 4, lines 35-61). Thus, SLUTSMAN clearly discloses creating the invitations before a process of setting an area of a database for storing chat messages. Accordingly, Applicant submits that SLUTSMAN fails to disclose or render the recited feature of independent claim 1 of the invitation message being created by the chairman video game terminal during a process of setting the area of the database for storing chat messages.

Applicant further submits that TATHAM and LUZESKI similarly fail to disclose or render obvious the above-recited feature. In this regard, TATHAM discloses a system for providing a communications network wherein a dedicated intranet site is created based upon a request to create the dedicated network site (TATHAM, col. 3, lines 21-32). After the dedicated intranet site is created, a server sends unique address information of the dedicated site to at least one other user (TATHAM, col. 3, lines 34-37). Furthermore, LUZESKI merely discloses a system that provides e-mail, voice-mail, and fax-mail

services to subscribers (LUZESKI, Abstract). Therefore, Applicant submits that TATHAM and LUZESKI fail to cure the deficiencies of MORRIS and SLUTSMAN.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant submits that MORRIS, SLUTSMAN, TATHAM, and LUZESKI, whether considered alone or together in any proper combination thereof, fail to disclose or render obvious the electronic chat joining method as recited by amended independent claim 1. Specifically, Applicant submits that MORRIS, SLUTSMAN, TATHAM, and LUZESKI fail to disclose at least the feature, as generally recited by independent claim 1, of the invitation message being created by the chairman video game terminal during a process of setting the area of the database for storing chat messages. Thus, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious thereby. Furthermore, Applicant further submits that independent claims 5 and 9 of the present application generally recite a similar combination of features as those set forth in independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are also allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*.

With respect to the Examiner's rejection of dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, and 11-16, Applicant submits that these claims are all directly or indirectly dependent from one of independent claims 1 and 5, which are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*. Thus, these dependent claims are submitted to also be allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*. Furthermore, all dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record.

With respect to new dependent claims 17-19, Applicant submits that these claims are also dependent from one of independent claims 1, 5, and 9, which are allowable for at

least the reasons discussed *supra*. Thus, these new dependent claims are submitted to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*. Furthermore, the new dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record. For example, new dependent claim 17 recites transmitting, from the guest video game terminal to the chairman video game terminal, an invitation answer signal in response to the guest video game terminal receiving the guest instruction.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that each and every pending claim of the present application (i.e., claims 1-9 and 11-21) meets the requirements for patentability. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection and to indicate the allowance of each and every pending claim in the present application.

CONCLUSION

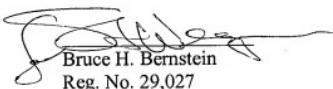
In view of the fact that none of the art of record, whether considered alone, or in any proper combination thereof, discloses or renders obvious the present invention as now defined by the pending claims, and in further view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the Examiner's action and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

If there should be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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March 16, 2009
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